

SUBJECT: DRAFT – Action Items from April 18, 2012 Meeting –

(Waltz DRAFT April 24, 2012)

Oregon's 2010 Integrated Report & EPA's proposed 303(d) list update:

LSAC members expressed interest and asked detailed questions about DEQ's 2010 Integrated Report & EPA's proposed additions to the 303(d) list. Based on this level of interest, DEQ concluded that it will be useful to provide more details on the 2010 Integrated Report and 303(d) list (specifically, for the new DEQ MidCoast listings) for the LSAC#3 meeting. DEQ was not able to fully address certain questions about the basis for EPA's proposed new listings because DEQ is still reviewing those during the extended public comment period (to April 30). EPA staff provided some clarification. We plan to provide as much detail as possible at the next LSAC meeting, but do not anticipate that EPA's decision will be finalized by May 16. We plan to make this an ongoing update item until the EPA 303(d) list is finalized and merged with Oregon's. *(Additional handout: Oregon's approved new 303(d) listed waterbodies for 2010, based on DEQ submission. This list does not include any additional listings proposed by EPA)*

Quality & sources of data (for 303(d) listings and for TMDL development):

LSAC members asked a series of questions related to the data quality & the sources of data during discussions on both the 303(d) listings and specifically related to data used for development of bacteria TMDLs. DEQ provided an overview of our quality assurance/quality control program for data collected by DEQ and participants in the volunteer monitoring program and/or grant funded projects. Additional details on data sources and quality will be provided as the technical working groups focus on approaches to the TMDLs for individual pollutants and the supporting information for specific watersheds or subbasins.

Bacteria Source Tracking (BST)/Microbial Source Tracking (MST):

Following DEQ's presentation on approaches to bacteria TMDL development, particularly the source assessment, LSAC members and public attendees provided comments related to a broad category of sampling and analytical techniques generally referred to as Bacterial Source Tracking (BST) or Microbial Source Tracking (MST). Some commenters referred to genetic analysis and the Lower Smith River BST study was referenced as an example of a study conducted in Oregon. DEQ agreed to make that study available, which was funded, in part, by DEQ 319 grant funds. The study background, methods, results, conclusions as well as interpretation issues associated with that study, are too extensive to summarize in this memo. Overall, DEQ concluded that the study provided insights into the issues and challenges associated with properly designing and conducting BST/MST studies at a watershed scale. DEQ will also provide a summary of our evaluation and interpretation of the results of that study.

(Note: DEQ and others have concluded that BST/MST studies need to focus on targeted questions in an appropriately sized geographic area. This view is consistent with primary literature on the subject as well as the Oregon Department of Agriculture's use of BST in compliance investigations. BST/MST studies should not replace a well-designed source assessment and traditional indicator bacteria sampling program, but rather are best suited to further defining a well-established problem at a smaller geographic scale after a number of other fundamental questions have been addressed. These BST/MST studies are expensive to properly design and conduct.)

For more details on BST/MST methodology and recent BST/MST studies, see: *Microbial Source Tracking Guide Document. (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2005). Office of Research and Development, Washington, DC EPA-600/R-05/064. <http://www.epa.gov/nrmrl/pubs/600r05064.html>* and also at

<http://www.extension.purdue.edu/waterquality/resources/MSTGuide.pdf>

USGS also developed a publication on BST/MST studies: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/tm/2005/tm2a3/>